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Online Learning Steering Committee and Online Learning Recommendation

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI®

FACULTY SENATE RECOMMENDATION #3 2017–2018

Authored and Submitted by the Academics Committee

A FACULTY SENATE recommendation to dissolve the Online Learning Steering Committee (OLSC) and reform it with a new structure, new membership, and a new charge.

WHEREAS, in its current configuration the membership of the OLSC includes faculty representatives from each of the academic colleges of the University, and

WHEREAS, the University's Plan for Academic Reorganization will render the current collegiate representation of the OLSC redundant, and,

WHEREAS, the large size of the OLSC, with twelve faculty members, three staff members, and seven ex-officio members, has made it difficult for the OLSC to convene monthly as stipulated by its own by-laws, and

WHEREAS, the work of the OLSC has primarily concerned technological and pedagogical issues relevant to online learning, and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of the Faculty Senate that the growth of online learning at the University ought to be directed by policies arising from a strategic vision of the role of online learning in the furtherance of the University's mission;

THEREFORE WE RECOMMEND that the Office of the Provost dissolve the OLSC and reform it with a smaller number of members, primarily faculty who are representative of the new organizational structure of the University, and fewer staff and ex-officio members, and

WE FURTHER RECOMMEND that the charge delivered to the new committee include the formulation of policy recommendations concerning: the strategic, purposeful growth of online learning at the University; the evaluation of online courses to ensure the delivery of authentic course content and the occurrence of regular and substantive instructor/student interaction that utilizes best pedagogical practices for online learning; the differentiation of treatment between fully online students and partially online students in matters such as enrollment windows and caps; and the impact of online teaching responsibilities upon faculty welfare.

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RECOMMENDED that copies of this recommendation shall be sent to the Online Learning Steering Committee, the Faculty Senate, the Gulf Coast Faculty Council, the Provost, and the President.